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By hard work and by virtue of the noble workers in the past, we have obtained our present position and standards. Let us then still press onward, increasing our knowledge, so that not only by ourselves, but by the medical profession as well, our work shall be considered worthy, in all respects, to be ranked as a profession. Nursing is indeed an honorable, a remunerative, a noble calling and it is not the apotheosis of the absurd for nurses to put forth every effort to exalt it into a profession and to rank it with the higher branches of learning and culture.

SOME OPPORTUNITIES OF A PRIVATE DUTY NURSE¹

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Someone has said that the essentials for a happy life are health, work and friends. Most of us have work and there are few who are totally without friends, but do we all have health?

What do you consider the first requisite for health? I would say knowledge. Mothers and fathers should know how to teach their children to live normally. It used to be said that "the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world," but we have learned that it is wrong to rock the cradle and the wise mother will put brakes on it. We might change the saying to the one who trains the baby rules the world.

A baby's training begins as soon as it is born into the world. The three important points in training a baby or in nursing a sick baby, or a sick adult, for that matter, are cleanliness, quiet and regularity. Any sensible person knows this.

What more discouraging picture can you call to mind than the first two or three days on a private case with a sick baby of two years, or two sick children; household disorganized, mother nervous, incompetent, noisy, prejudiced against the nurse; jealous if the baby shows any signs of coming over? Here a nurse has to bring all her powers of self control, knowledge and training.

How many times I have heard the remark from nurses, in hospitals and out: "If I only didn't have the family to contend with and could have the patient alone!" But you *do* have the family, and it is yours to learn how to deal with it; to do this you will have to study. Do not think because you have a diploma from your hospital and a certificate from your State Board that you do not have to study. Nursing is more than the mechanical work of bathing, rubbing and giving medicine. You should have all the requisites of a diplomat, to which should be

¹ Read before the local association of nurses of Greensboro.

added technical skill and scientific knowledge. In other words, an ideal nurse should be "as wise as a serpent and as harmless as a dove."

Of the three points I have mentioned, cleanliness, quiet, regularity, I verily believe quiet is the most important. Certainly without quiet the other two cannot be attained. I believe noise is one of the curses of the age. How many of us could answer to King Lear's description of his daughter when he said "Her voice is sweet and low, an excellent thing in woman." We all know how the English comment on American women's voices. Those of you who are conversant with your Bible remember "the crackling of thorns under a pot." So it seems as if a loud voice were a long-established failing but that is no reason why it should not be overcome with some other long established errors.

The nurse has an excellent opportunity in the first month of an obstetrical case to lay the foundations of a child's education by training both mother and baby in regular habits and self control. In saying this I do not mean to speak disparagingly of mothers, for there are many who study child culture and keep up with what is being learned but, on the other hand, it is no sign that a woman is competent because she is a mother. There are many who spend more time and thought on their children's adornment than on their food or mentality. If a nurse is thrown with a mother like that it is her duty to teach her. If the nurse has studied and read books on child nature by the great teachers such as Froebel, Sequin and Montessori, she will be able perhaps to present knowledge to her in a way that will not offend and that will leave her searching for more knowledge, and there will be opened to her new realms where the feeding of a little child's body is a sacred rite, inasmuch as improper feeding may foster a weak and vicious mind.

We, as nurses, should appreciate the high place we occupy and try to realize the opportunities we have to help make this a better world. Often mothers ask about their babies. That is your opportunity: when you are asked. When we volunteer advice, people are often in the wrong frame of mind to receive it, and many of us make ourselves obnoxious by giving advice at the wrong time. It makes us appear pedantic and conceited, and does harm rather than good. "Knowledge without goodness is dangerous." Nurses should have some idea of psychology as well as physiology.

Nurses should also know a great deal about foods. A graduate of five years said to me: "I never did know anything about cooking and housekeeping: I don't like it anyway." (She had not passed the State Examination.) I wanted to know how she managed about her patients' diet. "Oh!", she said, "My cases are generally typhoid, and I only have liquid diets to prepare." Do you wonder that we have many adverse criticisms about nurses?